

**Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division**  
Variance  
BZZ-5753

**Date:** September 27, 2012

**Applicant:** Allied Parking

**Addresses of Property:** 801 8<sup>th</sup> Street South, 802 9<sup>th</sup> Street South and 814 9<sup>th</sup> Street South

**Contact Person and Phone:** Brian Maupin, (612) 332-0391

**Planning Staff and Phone:** Shanna Sether, (612) 673-2307

**Date Application Deemed Complete:** August 29, 2012

**End of 60 Day Decision Period:** October 28, 2012

**Ward:** 7      **Neighborhood Organization:** Elliott Park Neighborhood Association

**Existing Zoning:** OR3 Institutional Office Residence District

**Proposed Use:** Two projecting signs for an existing parking structure

**Variance:** to increase the maximum area of two projecting signs from 12 square feet to 56 square feet located on an existing principal parking facility (parking ramp)

**Zoning code section authorizing the requested variance:** Chapter 525, Article IX Variances, Specifically Section 525.520(21) “to vary the number, type, height, area or location of allowed signs...”

**Background:** The subject property is approximately 1.8 acres and includes an existing parking ramp with frontages along 8<sup>th</sup> Street South, Chicago Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street South. The parking ramp is co-owned by Allied Parking, Inc. and Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC). The applicants are proposing to install two projecting signs, each on the corners of the building at 8<sup>th</sup> Street South and Chicago Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street South and Chicago Avenue. The projecting signs will direct traffic towards the two vehicle entrances to the parking ramp. Both signs will be two-sided, projecting signs, approximately 112 inches high, 35 inches wide and 24 inches deep. The sign copy “PARK” and parking logo “P” will be internally illuminated and white LED perimeter lighting will be provided around the cabinet and arrow. The signs are measured by drawing a box around the entire sign. Based on this measurement, both signs will be approximately 56 square feet. The maximum area of projecting signs in the OR3 Institutional Office Residence District is 12 square feet; therefore, the applicant has requested variances to increase the proposed area of the two new projecting signs.

Staff has received correspondence from the Elliot Park Neighborhood Association. Staff will forward additional comments, if any are received, at the Board of Adjustment meeting.

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**Findings Required by the Minneapolis Zoning Code:**

**VARIANCES** to increase the maximum permitted area for two projecting signs from 12 square feet to approximately 56 feet

- 1. Practical difficulties exist in complying with the ordinance because of circumstances unique to the property. The unique circumstances were not created by persons presently having an interest in the property and are not based on economic considerations alone.**

The circumstances for which the variance is sought are unique to the parcel. The applicants are proposing to add two new projecting signs that are consistent with the HCMC campus signage and are intended to direct drivers towards the two entrances of the parking ramp. The signs are measured by drawing a box around the entire sign. The proposed projecting signs are 56 square feet in area. The sign itself is shaped like an “L” and is approximately 38 square feet in area. Based on the length of the primary building walls, wall signs would be allowed up to 180 square feet, however, the projecting sign is limited to 12 square feet. Staff believes that a structured parking ramp with three block-long frontages, two of which are adjacent to one-way streets, presents unique identification needs. These circumstances have not been created by the applicant.

- 2. The property owner or authorized applicant proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner that will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and the comprehensive plan.**

The regulations governing on-premise signs were established to allow effective signage appropriate to the planned character of each zoning district, to promote an attractive environment by minimizing visual clutter and confusion, to minimize adverse effects on nearby property and to protect the public health safety and welfare. The subject property is zoned OR3 Institutional Office Residence District. The proposed signage would be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance at 56 square feet in area, located at the corners of the intersections. The height and type of the signs proposed meet the requirements in the ordinance. The applicant states that the increased area is required to ensure effective identification of the building and to direct drivers towards the two entrances of the parking ramp. The two proposed projecting signs, 56 square feet in area, will allow for effective visibility, directional guidance and a reasonable use of the property.

- 3. The proposed variance will not alter the essential character of the locality or be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity. If granted, the proposed variance will not be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the general public or of those utilizing the property or nearby properties.**

The proposed signage will not alter the essential character of the locality or be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity. The proposed signage will be consistent with the HCMC campus signage. The sign copy “PARK” and parking logo “P” will be internally illuminated and white LED perimeter lighting will be provided around the cabinet and arrow. Neither of the signs would front directly onto any property that would find the proposed sign

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overly imposing or intrusive. Granting the sign variance would not be detrimental to health, safety or welfare of the general public.

### **Findings Required by the Minneapolis Zoning Code for a sign adjustment:**

- 1. The sign adjustment will not significantly increase or lead to sign clutter in the area or result in a sign that is inconsistent with the purpose of the zoning district in which the property is located.**

The proposed signage is located on the west corner of the building at 9<sup>th</sup> Street South and Chicago Avenue and the north corner of the building at 8<sup>th</sup> Street South and Chicago Avenue, essentially at the vehicle entrances to the ramp. The applicant is proposing to remove four existing wall signs on the building; one located on 8<sup>th</sup> Street South, one located on Chicago Avenue, one located at the corner of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South and Chicago Avenue and one located at the corner of the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue South and Chicago Avenue. The remaining signs include two dynamic wall signs at the corner of 8<sup>th</sup> Street South and Chicago Avenue, and three non-illuminated wall signs stating “Hospital Parking Ramp” along 8<sup>th</sup> Street South, Chicago Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street South. In total there will be seven signs on the building; the two projecting signs and four wall signs. The addition of the two proposed projecting directional signs will not lead to sign clutter.

- 2. The sign adjustment will allow a sign that relates in size, shape, materials, color, illumination and character to the function and architectural character of the building or property on which the sign will be located.**

The proposed signs will relate in size, shape, material, color, illumination and character of the building on the property and the rest of the HCMC campus. The signs will be professionally installed with quality materials. The signage is proposed to include “PARK” with a directional arrow and the parking logo “P”. The signage is fabricated from aluminum and is internally illuminated.

### **Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development - Variance:**

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development Planning Division recommends that the Board of Adjustment adopt the findings above and approve the variance to increase the maximum area of two projecting signs from 12 square feet to 56 square feet located on an existing principal parking facility (parking ramp) located at 801 8<sup>th</sup> Street South, 802 9<sup>th</sup> Street South and 814 9<sup>th</sup> Street South in the OR3 Institutional Office Residence District, subject to the following condition of approval:

1. Approval of the final sign plans by the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division.

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2. Four existing wall signs shall be removed; one located on 8<sup>th</sup> Street South, one located on Chicago Avenue, one located at the corner of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South and Chicago Avenue and one located at the corner of the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue South and Chicago Avenue.

### **Attachments:**

- 1) Written descriptions and findings submitted by the applicant
- 2) Copy of letters sent to Council Member Goodman and Elliot Park Neighborhood Association
- 3) Letter from Elliot Park Neighborhood Association
- 4) Zoning map
- 5) Survey
- 6) Site plan
- 7) Building elevations
- 8) Sign plans
- 9) Photographs